

Michigan Women

A Publication
of the
Michigan
Women's
Commission

Fall 2001



◆ GOVERNOR JOHN ENGLER ◆ DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL RIGHTS DIRECTOR NANETTE REYNOLDS ◆
◆ CHAIRWOMAN ANNE NORLANDER ◆ EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MARTHA TRUSCOTT ◆

COMMISSIONER JUDI CLARK CAPTURES THE AUDIENCE IN WASHINGTON, DC

The National Association of Women's Commissions (NACW) held its annual conference in Washington, DC in mid-July.

Newly appointed Commissioner, Judi Clark, of Rockville, spoke during the opening address at the NACW conference about the Samantha Reid Foundation. Commissioner Clark's daughter, Samantha, passed away after Gamma Hydroxybutyrate (GHB) was slipped into her soft drink in 1999. Judi warned the audience about GHB and the deadly dangers of the drug. She also provided the audience with safety tips to protect oneself against falling victim to this, or other, deadly rape drugs. There was not a dry eye in the entire room as Judi's speech caught the attention of the audience, making her personal tragedy a reality to those in attendance.

The MWC is very proud to have been represented by Commissioner Judi Clark at the NACW conference, and congratulates Commissioner Clark on her ongoing efforts to raise awareness about the dangers of GHB, rape and club drugs.

Following Commissioner Clark's speech, audience members were eager to learn more about GHB, rape and club drugs. The MWC provided "tool kits" to commissions nation-wide and encouraged them to initiate legislation to criminalize the use of GHB as only seven states in the country have such laws on the books today.

Other activities at the NACW conference included: speeches from several congresswomen about ERA legislation and gender equity, a panel with representatives from companies such as AOL, National Public Radio (NPR), speaking on media in the 21st Century. Several workshops informed the Commission about girls and technology, and also gave tips on running and directing a commission for women.



Commissioner Judi Clark; Executive Director, Martha Truscott; and Chairwoman Anne Norlander enjoy a visit to Washington, D.C. for the NACW Conference.

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Commissioner's Spotlights...



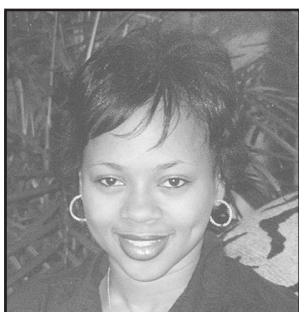
Commissioner Judi Clark joined the Commission with an interest in working to promote personal safety for women and to contribute to our GHB awareness campaign. Judi's daughter, Samantha, died after Gamma Hydroxybutyrate (GHB) was slipped into her soft drink in 1999. Since then, Judi has taken a break from her job as a pipefitter to lobby for stricter GHB laws. Judi's efforts proved successful when the Hillory J. Farais and Samantha Reid Date Rape Drug Prohibition Act was passed in 2000. This act established GHB as a Schedule I drug, and punishes persons in possession of GHB with up to 20 years in prison. Judi has a 20 year old son, Charles, and a five year old pitt bull named Scrappy. In her spare time, Judi likes to stay active by rollerblading, camping, and golfing.

Commissioner Lynda Cosgrove loves her job as a Financial Manager because she is constantly learning. Lynda looks forward to learning more about women's issues and taking the work of the MWC back home to her community. Issues that Lynda believes are vitally important are health care and domestic violence. Wife of Tom, a financial consultant, and mother of Travis, Trent, and Trevor, Lynda also volunteers her time with the Doula Teen Pregnancy Program and is the president of the Elk Rapids Business and Professional Women. In the small amount of spare time she has, Lynda likes to garden, cook and read.



Commissioner Mandeep Grewal is an avid reader and learner. After graduating from Punjab University in India with a bachelor and master's degree, she came to the United States and began her studies at Eastern Michigan University for a second master's degree in Economics. Presently, she is working on her PhD in communication planning through the urban and regional planning program at the University of Michigan. Mandeep was formerly the program specialist at the Great Lakes Commission before beginning her doctoral studies. She joined the MWC in hopes of better serving the community of women in Michigan, and would like to better understand the needs of immigrant and minority women in her county. Mandeep believes that it is essential for women to know their options when it comes to legal, constitutional, educational, and economic issues. Her husband, Robert Brackenbury is an attorney, and currently works for Eastern Michigan University.

Commissioner Julie Stevens, of Saginaw, likes to stay busy. Now that her fourth child is leaving for college, she has stepped up to take on the new responsibility of serving as a commissioner for the MWC. Julie has volunteered herself to many organizations over the past thirty years, and is currently the President for the Saginaw Valley Zoological Society. As they work on an expansion project, Julie is writing grants as well as working on fund raising activities to benefit the zoo. Recently she accepted a position with Saginaw Valley State University as Program Director for the Family Business Program. Julie feels concern for victims of breast cancer and postpartum depression and therefore hopes to become involved in these important women's health care initiatives.



Commissioner Ramirra Stackhouse joined the MWC ready to help improve the quality of life for Michigan women. She believes that the issues most important to women are breast cancer, diabetes, and child care. Ramirra received a full academic scholarship to North Carolina Central University and graduated in 1998 with a bachelor's degree in Business Management. Her ideal job would be to own a wedding coordinating business. She is active with the American Diabetes Association and the Boys and Girls Club. Ramirra lives with her husband, Jerry, the 2 time NBA All-Star shooting guard for the Detroit Pistons, and their daughter Alexis, son Antonio, and step-son, Jaye. Ramirra enjoys spending time with family, planning parties, and reading.

Commissioner's Corner...



**Commissioner
Ramirra Stackhouse**

POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION

Recently, a Texas mother gained national attention after she drowned her five children in her bathtub. Although the debate continues, some experts believe the actions of this mother may have been the result of a postpartum depression disorder. The Michigan Women's Commission is partnering with the Michigan Department of Community Health to raise awareness about postpartum depression, and hopefully prevent future tragedies like the Texas case.

Postpartum depression is diagnosed by an unstable emotional state, occurring in women who have recently given birth. While postpartum psychosis is relatively rare, this illness at a lesser degree is much more common. There are three categories including: postpartum 'blues,' chronic depressive syndrome, and postpartum psychosis.

Postpartum 'baby blues' disorder, also known as transitory minor affective disorder, affects 60% to 80% of U.S. mothers.¹ This emotional state usually occurs 1-3 days after delivery and has symptoms such as: frequent and prolonged crying, irritability, poor sleep, mood changes, and a sense of vulnerability. Typically, this category does not require treatment, as the symptoms tend to disappear on their own.

While chronic depressive syndrome is more severe than the 'baby blues,' women struggling with it rarely seek treatment. At least 10% of new mothers experience the chronic depressive syndrome within several days after delivery, often after the woman has returned home from the hospital.² Despondency, tearfulness, feelings of guilt, anxiety, irritability and inadequacy are all symptoms which can last from a few weeks to several months.

When a woman has reached postpartum psychosis, her reactions are similar to common psychotic reactions including: confusion, agitation, fatigue, alterations in mood, delusions or hallucinations, hyperactivity and rapid speech or mania, and suicidal or homicidal thoughts. Typically the onset of this illness is within the first three months after delivery, 80% of all them after a 3-14 day symptom free period.³

More recently, researchers have suggested adding a fourth category, postpartum post-traumatic stress syndrome, which links the characteristics of postpartum with birth and delivery. Therefore, variables such as a Caesarian birth, death of the infant, or other stressors can trigger the postpartum illness.⁴

Depending on the severity of the illness, a woman could need anything from self-help books to a prescription anti-depressant. Using the prevention tips listed in this newsletter can greatly enhance therapy, and also reduce the risk of future problems.

If you are a woman experiencing symptoms of postpartum depression, please know that you are not alone. Do not be ashamed to ask for help. There are qualified professionals, support groups and treatment programs available to assist you. And remember, your well-being is important to your baby's development.

If someone you know is suffering from symptoms of postpartum depression, please talk with her about her feelings. Let her know that there is professional assistance available to her, and encourage her to seek help from a therapist, psychiatrist, nutritionist, or a family doctor.

Support Groups for Postpartum Depression:
Depression After Delivery (DAD)
www.depressionafterdelivery.com
(800) 944-4PPD

Postpartum Education for Parents
www.sbpep.org

Postpartum Support International
www.chss.iup.edu/postpartum/
(847) 791-7722

Postpartum Prevention Tips:

- Research information and the responsibilities of motherhood.
- Try not to move soon after the baby is born.
- Locate and visit a family doctor early.
- Be sure to get enough rest.
- Eat well.
- Arrange for a babysitter in advance.
- Continue your outside interests, but eliminate some of the responsibilities or rearrange your schedule.
- Make friends with other people who have experience raising children.
- Surround yourself with a support system of friends and relatives.
- When feeling overwhelmed, seek help from spouse, relatives, or dependable friends.
- Discuss your plans and worries with your spouse, relatives, or close friends.
- Make your needs a priority.
- Trust your instincts.
- Try to avoid strict schedules.
- Do not compare yourself to others.
- Do not overload yourself with unimportant tasks.
- Do not expect too much of yourself.

¹ Kruckman, Laurence and Susan Smith, An Introduction to Postpartum Illness. (College of Humanities and Social Science, Indiana University of Pennsylvania: www.postpartum.net, 2001).

² Depression After Delivery, Inc., Postpartum Depression: Symptoms and Causes. (www.depressionafterdelivery.com).

³ Kruckman and Smith, www.postpartum.net.

⁴ Kruckman and Smith, www.postpartum.net.

THE FIRST ANNUAL GOVERNOR'S UNSUNG HEROINE AWARDS

In March 2002, the Michigan Women's Commission will host The First Annual Governor's Unsung Heroine Awards at the Detroit Institute of Arts. The Michigan Women's Commission wonders, "Who is the unsung heroine in your life?"

The criteria for The First Annual Governor's Unsung Heroine Awards are as follows:

- The nominee must have contributed to improving the lives of Michigan citizens.
- Examples of Unsung Heroines are those women who have improved the quality of life of Michigan citizens in the areas of civil rights, community, economic independence, education, health and safety, and youth development.
- Each nomination form will be considered on its own merit and for its unique qualities.

To receive more information or a nomination packet, please call (517) 373-2884.



THE MICHIGAN WOMEN'S COMMISSION SUPPORTS A "HEALTHY MICHIGAN"

On July 10, 2001, Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) Director Jim Haveman held a press conference to announce the Healthy Lifestyle Program for Michigan citizens. Based on the year 2000 statistics, 39 percent of Michigan residents are overweight, and 23 percent are obese. Weight problems and high cholesterol contribute to 40 percent of heart disease deaths each year. The MDCH designed the program to help citizens control their weight and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

"About two-thirds of Michigan residents who are overweight are trying to lose weight, so the

interest is certainly there," said Haveman. "But many people just try the latest fad diets, which won't work for the rest of your life and can be dangerous to your health. This initiative focuses on healthy solutions and providing the information and tools people need for lifelong success in weight management."

In order to assist Michigan citizens in creating and maintaining a healthy lifestyle, the MDCH has included a professional education component with the Michigan Nurses Association. They have also collaborated with the Michigan State Medical Society, the Michigan Osteopathic Association, and the Michigan Dietetic Association to update cli-

nicians on the latest technology in weight management and health discipline.

The MDCH has also introduced the Fit Kit, which is packed with tips and advice for good nutrition and exercise. Some of the information included in the Fit Kit is a guide to eating healthy while traveling, tips for buying healthy food at the Supermarket, suggestions for good eating and physical activity for children, a list of 100 painless ways to lead a healthier life, and much more. If you would like to order a free Fit Kit, please call 1-866-4-FIT-KIT (1-866-434-8548).

The Michigan Department of Community Health maintains a commitment



Jim Haveman
Director, M.D.C.H.

to help Michigan citizens get on the right track with a healthy lifestyle. If you would like to learn more about the Healthy Lifestyle Program, please log on to www.mdch.state.mi.us.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Please help the Michigan Women's Commission support the American Cancer Society's "Tell A Friend Tuesday" by contacting your friends and relatives on October 2nd, and encouraging them to get a mammogram, conduct a self breast exam, and watch for early detection.

A NON-TRADITIONAL DESIGNER: LESLIE GREEN

Leslie Green has worked hard to attain her position as a designer. But, Leslie is not a typical designer--she designs assembly line tools for companies such as Saturn and GM. Traditionally, tool design has been a male dominated field. So, to prove her capability as a female designer, Leslie has had to work hard and ask many questions.

Leslie believes that tool design is a mostly male dominated field because "...men think differently than women. They can assemble things in their minds and work with their hands, but it doesn't come naturally to women." Because of this, Leslie has felt disadvantaged as a woman starting out in the tool design field. But, despite this disadvantage, Leslie's teachable nature prevailed. She was able to become a highly skilled and talented designer for Eckhart & Associates.

As a single mother of two and working two jobs, Leslie enrolled at Lansing Community College. A friend had told her about the Unigraphics program, and with much thought, Leslie decided to enroll and take the challenge. Due to the low number of women who chose to seek this career path, Leslie received a grant as an incentive to continue her education. After several years of working and studying, Leslie graduated with an associate's degree in drafting.

As Leslie began looking for a job, she faced yet another challenge: where tool designers had been in high demand in the past, there were now very few positions available. She turned to the phonebook and began calling numerous companies, hoping to find an available position. Just as she was losing her hopes for finding work, she discovered Eckhart & Associates, who later offered her a position. Leslie has been working with Eckhart & Associates for one year and is one of two Unigraphic designers.

According to a recent report issued by the National Council for Research on Women (NCRW), there is a great disparity between women and men in the science and technology field. The NCRW reports that women bring "important perspectives to the fields of science, technology, and engineering," and are underutilized in these fields.

MWC attends the Twilight Gathering

On the evening of July 12, 2001, MWC staff and commissioners attended the 22nd annual Women's Caring Program Twilight Gathering. The evening was designed to benefit the ChildCare Commitment, a non-profit organization that provides financial assistance for licensed childcare for low-income families. Thanks to the Women's Caring Program Board of Directors for their commitment to helping Michigan families, and to Carol Walters for opening her home for this wonderful event.

For more information about this program and how to get involved, please contact the MWC office at (517) 373-2884, or by e-mail at mwci1@state.mi.us.

NEW WELCOME AND FAREWELLS

The Michigan Women's Commission (MWC) would like to welcome Alissa DeGrow as the new Program and Outreach Specialist. DeGrow will be responsible for developing and managing special projects; providing staff assistance to the Commission's advisory committees; conducting research and assisting in policy development and outreach activities; representing the executive director at meetings and other functions; responding to constituent inquiries; and preparing publications and other informational materials.

DeGrow earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in political theory and constitutional democracy from James Madison College at Michigan State University in 2001. DeGrow has served as a crisis intervention specialist for the Council Against Domestic Assault in Lansing, and a volunteer steward for The Nature Conservancy.

Recently, the MWC bid farewell to student interns, Evie Zois and Megan Flynn, as they returned to school this fall. The MWC would like to thank Evie and Megan for their great work on behalf of Michigan women. Evie will be returning to James Madison College at Michigan State University to complete her degree in International Relations, and Megan will return to Wheaton College, where she is majoring in Communications.

Survey on Women's Issues

In order to best serve women in Michigan, we are looking to YOU, our readers, to find out what issues are of greatest importance. Please rank the following issues in order of importance to you (1=most important, 2=somewhat important, 3=least important) Your answers could play a pivotal role as we deliberate on future projects for the Commission.

- Women's Health
- Economic and Financial Independence
- Personal Safety
- Education and Job Training
- Women, Girls and Technology
- Other (Please expand in a brief paragraph)

Please return the completed survey to the MWC, 124 W. Allegan Street, Suite 110, Lansing, MI 48933, fax it to 517-335-1649, or email the information to mwcil@state.mi.us Thanks for taking the time to complete and *return this survey by Friday, November 2nd!*



Women's Commission Publications

- All about the MWC
- Club Drugs: What you should know
- Club Drugs: What you and your kids should know
- Domestic violence mirror clings
- Domestic violence wallet card
- Ecstasy: It's a no-brainer
- GHB: A vicious scam. A proven killer (For bodybuilders)
- Methamphetamine
- Safety tips for you and your family (also available in Spanish)
- Stalking: Understand your rights
- Watch out for rape drugs
- 1999 Women's Resource Directory
- 2000 Annual Report

To order publications, call (517) 373-2884

The Michigan Women's Commission would like to announce the arrival of the Personal Safety brochure. This publication includes safety information and tips for Michigan citizens. To order copies of the Personal Safety brochure, please call (517) 373-2884.

OCTOBER IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

Mailing List Update

If your name or address needs to be changed on our newsletter mailing label, or if you receive duplicates, please mail or fax the correct information (along with our current label) to the address or fax number listed below. Thank you.

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